



Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016  
Mole Valley District Council Elections  
(Ashtead Common Ward)



**VOTE FOR**  
***David Hawksworth & Patricia Wiltshire***  
**Ashtead Independent Candidates**

We find that many of you agree with us - **National Political parties have no place in local government.** Ashtead needs Councillors who are prepared to give their time and skills for the benefit of our village community, free from control and constraint by any party whip or party dogma. In recent weeks, we and our colleagues have been very pleased to talk to hundreds of Ashtead residents in Common Ward, and we thank you for the welcome and support you have given us on the doorstep.

Our commitment is personal, and we fund our own campaign, unlike those of "big party" candidates whose expenses can be absorbed by party machines. The most recent colourful and glossy Conservative leaflet claims a great deal, but perhaps you should take much of it with a pinch of salt. Do you really believe that **they** achieved everything on their list without the involvement of others? Do you really believe they can deliver all they pledge?

**Ashtead Independents** do not usually comment on campaign material issued by opponents but sadly, this time, we feel we must highlight some of the gross inaccuracies, and misleading personal remarks, published by the Conservative candidates in Common Ward.

1. **THEY SAID:** *"We might not be a distinguished professor working in Madrid or called to investigate a murder somewhere in the UK at the drop of a pin, but we both play an active part in our local Ashtead community and have the time to serve Ashtead properly".*

**THE TRUTH:**

We, your **Independent candidates**, are both highly qualified professionals, but neither of us has a 9am - 5pm job. We can organise our time as we see fit, and certainly to suit council duties. For example, David has only spent only three full days in Madrid this year, and retires from there next month. Both of us are here most of the time as we work mostly from home, do not have the responsibility of small children, and are at a stage in our careers where we can spend yet more time on local affairs. In any case, many councillors have full-time jobs.

We are intimately involved with Ashtead affairs, including serving on the Ashtead Residents' Association Standing Committee, Patient Participation Groups, and the Ashtead Neighbourhood Forum. We would not even consider standing for election if we felt unable to do a Councillor's job properly. Our training and experience allows us to analyse complex information and to make decisions based on facts, and to argue our position forcefully in the face of opposition. We fully understand the level of commitment required to be effective Councillors, and now we have both the time and the energy required to ensure you are vigorously represented.

2. **THEY SAID:** *"All of the Ashtead Independent candidates in the election this year are members of the "Ashtead Community Vision" group whose "final report" recommended the loss of Green Belt Land around Ashtead."*

**THE TRUTH:**

(a) The four Ashtead Independent candidates have all been members of Ashtead Community Vision (ACV), but **so has Conservative Councillor Hunt**. No Conservative candidate was sufficiently committed

to the future of Ashtead to contribute to the hard work in forming the Neighbourhood Development Plan. When adopted, this document will influence the future character of Ashtead, and everyone was invited to take part. The Conservative candidates appear to be ignorant of the contents of the plan itself, even though it was available for public consultation for many weeks and is now under consideration by the Council.

(b) The ACV report did **NOT** recommend the use of green belt, and its Chairman has written to the Conservatives objecting to this allegation in the strongest possible terms, pointing out its hypocrisy in view of Councillor Hunt's involvement. We (**your two Independent candidates**) personally walked the whole of the Green Belt around Ashtead and submitted a technical report on the local landscape, wildlife, vegetation and its history to ACV. We are utterly committed to maintaining the character of Ashtead. We also want to preserve wildlife and the landscape, and prevent development from merging our village with Leatherhead and Epsom.

**3. THEY SAID:** "*We have just received increased Council Tax bills. ... The current Independents spoke in the Budget debate to say they regretted the limited staff pay rise ... Vote independent if you want higher bills.*"

**THE TRUTH:**

(a) The major part of your Council tax (and that with the biggest increase of 4%) was set by Surrey County Council - a Conservative controlled authority.

(b) The Independents are not, and have never been, in a position to set Council tax without Conservative agreement.

(c) Mole Valley District Council was offering the lowest pay rise (1%) of any Surrey District or Borough.

(d) The Conservatives were proposing a maximum 2% increase anyway, so a higher increase for staff would not have resulted in higher Council Tax.

*We listen to local people and their concerns. We imagine you would like to be represented by people with professional backgrounds who understand natural, social, and political environments and are strong in argument - ones who are likely to cope with the rigours of protocol and debate required in the Council Chamber. We cannot promise the impossible, but if elected we will do our best for you, and the community, with great sincerity.*



**Do read the leaflets presented by all candidates and decide who would best represent you.**

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